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ABSTRACT

During 1992, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare instituted several new collaborative projects to increase training opportunities for child care employees in the state: (1) to assure that high quality training would continue to be offered; (2) to respond to the mandate for ongoing training for all child care workers; and (3) to subsidize the training to make it affordable for more child care providers. The School Age Child Care program was developed to provide "latchkey" children with a safe and developmentally appropriate alternative. Licensed Child Care Centers serve the greatest number of children receiving day care, and 21,000 licensed child care center employees received training. The Better Kid Care program was designed to meet the needs of users and providers of legally unregulated and minimally certified providers. Home Based Child Care providers receive training through workshops, a training refund program, or through a Child Development Associate scholarship assistance program. Older Adult In-service Child Development Associate Training hopes to increase the number of available child care employees. The Early Childhood Education Linkage System collaborates with public and private agencies to improve the well-being of children in the state's early childhood programs by providing a number of information services, publications, and training opportunities. (TJQ)

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Annual Report 1992-93

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In any professional field, staff development is an essential means to improve programs, create staff satisfaction and competence, and remain on the cutting edge. This is certainly true in early childhood education and child care. Staff must be aware of new research and practices that are considered appropriate for child care employees. The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare recognizes the need for high quality training for child care workers; the Department also realizes that obstacles such as cost and accessibility can make training unavailable.

During 1992, the Department of Public Welfare instituted several new collaborative projects to increase training opportunities for child care employees in the Commonwealth. These initiatives were begun for several reasons. First, the Department wanted to assure that high quality training would continue to be offered. Second, periodic, ongoing training is

mandated for all child care workers. And third, the Department was able to subsidize the training to make it affordable for more child care providers.

The Department also continued contracts for staff training in the areas of home-based child care, school age child care and promotion of health and safety in child care settings. Training initiatives were developed for licensed child care and minimally certified child care staff. Another initiative was the development of a model program to bring older workers into Child Development Associate (CDA) training.

Training providers offered curricula in the following seven categories:

- developmentally appropriate practices;
- emergent literacy;
- child development;
- discipline;
- health and safety;
- program administration; and
- collaboration with community resources and parents.

A description of each of the initiatives follows, with types of services, targeted populations and service areas noted.

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School age child care is a much needed service in the Commonwealth. A great deal of media attention has been focused on "latchkey" children left alone in their homes before and after school because their parents must work. The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that by 1995 three-fourths of the mothers of school age children are expected to be in the labor force.

School Age Child Care (SACC) programs were developed to provide these children with a safe and developmentally appropriate alternative. Child care for school age children is provided through a diverse network of organizations that includes churches, synagogues, Boys and Girls Clubs, YM/YWCAs, traditional day care centers, family day care homes, municipal recreation departments, schools, community organizations and neighborhood centers. They have the potential to offer children a wide range of services and a variety of experiences, as well as make the services more accessible.

The Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare funds four organizations to implement and administer services for latchkey children and to assure the quality of programs: Community Services for Children, Day Care Association of Montgomery County, YMCA of Pittsburgh and Central Intermediate Unit. All offer training, mini-grants for start-up and expansion of quality programs, and grants for quality improvement of

The four organizations conducted 113 training programs that served 2,200 child care providers.

existing SACC programs. Due to funding limitations, emphasis for the last fiscal year was placed on the start-up of new, high-quality SACC programs, and on training and technical assistance. The four organizations conducted 113 training programs that served 2,200 child care providers and awarded 77 grants to 61 programs serving 2,359 children.

In addition, the four organizations offered on-site technical assistance, publications, conference subsidies and assistance by phone to SACC programs in their regions.

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Licensed Child Care Centers (LCCC) serve the greatest number of children receiving day care. Two providers were responsible for assuring that high quality training sessions were available and accessible to LCCC employees during the past year. Louise Child Care served the western and central regions of the state, while Marywood College served eastern Pennsylvania.

From spring 1992 to June 1993, the two served a total of over 21,000 child care employees. Trainees could choose from several options: general workshops, agency specific workshops, subsidized early childhood education courses and subsidized conference attendance.

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By making programs more accessible, training providers were able to serve a significant number of people. Workshops were conducted in most counties, except where it was more feasible to offer programs serving several counties at one site.

To provide the many training programs needed for LCCC caregivers and to maintain cost-effectiveness, Marywood and Louise Child Care forged partnerships with other organizations and multiple subcontractors. By having regionalized subcontractors, training sessions could be held simultaneously at several sites. Both Marywood and Louise provided training outlines to subcontractors and reviewed course materials to ensure the quality and consistency of training.

Additionally, the two providers developed articulation agreements with several colleges to offer participants college credits for attending a specified series of training workshops. Thus, child care staff could build a career ladder while implementing quality programs and practices. By helping people obtain training necessary for promotion within the child care/early childhood education field, staff turnover, a major problem in child care, may be reduced.

In just over a year, 21,000 licensed child care center employees received training.

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Many families purchase child care services from legally unregulated and minimally certified providers. It is difficult to assess, improve or maintain quality at these sites because they rarely come to the attention of officials who might monitor them. In fact, it is virtually impossible to determine the number of providers who operate this way. During the 1992-93 fiscal year, the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare became partners with Penn State Cooperative Extension to implement the Better Kid Care program in response to the needs of these parents and providers.

More than 4,000 people were enrolled in the Better Kid Care program.

The Better Kid Care program offers educational materials – a kit with information on health and safety, child development and age appropriate activities for children, along with six learn-at-home programs called "caring for kids." Child care workers or parents can obtain the materials by writing or calling, via toll-free hotline, the Penn State Extension offices. Parents are encouraged to share information with day care providers who might be reluctant to draw attention to themselves by requesting information. More than 4,000 people were enrolled in this project and another 2,000 names were placed on waiting lists because demand exceeded the supply of kits available.

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In addition, 57 county Penn State Cooperative Extension offices conducted workshops for child care providers. Training in various topics in early childhood development and education was provided to more than 2,250 people.

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A significant number of children receive day care services in the homes of day care providers rather than in centers or schools. These providers run small programs that serve from four to as many as 12 children. Providers may receive training through workshops, a training refund program or through a Child Development Associate (CDA) scholarship assistance program.

Keystone University Research Corporation (KURC) has been serving these care providers with the refund/voucher and the CDA scholarship programs for five years.

The refund/voucher program allows providers to attend training of their choice and submit reasonable costs to KURC for reimbursement, if approved in advance. Acceptable training options include conferences,

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Scholarship assistance was provided to 225 home-based care providers.

seminars, college courses (reimbursed up to $250), workshops and on-site training. To receive reimbursement, providers must submit evidence of their day care home registration or license, the training must be appropriate and last at least six hours. Training topics include health issues such as first aid and CPR, child development and program activities. A total of 660 refunds were approved last year.

For child care employees with low incomes KURC offers scholarships and scholarship assistance to help them obtain the CDA credential, indicating they have completed a prescribed course or series of training sessions related to child care and early childhood education. During 1992-93, 225 child care workers received scholarships or financial assistance.

In addition to these ongoing services, KURC offered direct training workshops this past year. The six-hour sessions, focusing on "record-keeping and taxes," were held at 12 sites across the state and were attended by 414 participants. With the addition of more direct trainers, the program was able to serve a total of 2,875 child care employees in 1992-93.

KURC also distributes a newsletter and operates a toll-free telephone hotline to make information accessible to providers. The use of both services increased during 1992-93.

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Generations Together, an organization with much experience in intergenerational programming, designed and implemented a program to help older adults meet the classroom requirements for the CDA credential. Because older adults are often overlooked as potential child care staff, this training model may increase the number of available child care employees.

The program uses a "train the trainers" model. Generations Together trained five instructors from several regions of Pennsylvania. They and their sponsoring agencies then recruited older adults as participants. Generations Together provided financial and information support to the agencies and instructors, including copies of *Generations Together: A Job Training Curriculum for Older Workers in Child Care*. Site visits were also made to allow Generations Together staff to interact with trainers and trainees to assess the success of implementation.

To maximize benefits from scarce resources, Generations Together collaborated with Louise Child Care to offer the 60-hour CDA

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A total of 51 people, including 18 older adults, received CDA training.

training in three-to-six-hour workshops corresponding to Louise's other training sessions, thus serving both younger and older participants. Thirty-three younger adults received the training as well. All participants were told how to complete the certification and assessment procedures necessary to obtain the CDA credential.

A total of 51 people, including 18 older adults, were trained under this initiative.

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The Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS), funded in part through the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, collaborates with public and private agencies to improve the well-being of children in the state's early childhood programs. ECELS services include:

- a registry of professional health consultants for technical assistance and local linkage with child care providers;
- a toll-free information hotline;
- a free lending library;
- a quarterly newsletter; and
- arranging linkages among community-based trainers and child care providers.

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ECELS staff also work with staff of the Departments of Health, Education and Public Welfare (licensing staff), as well as private-sector contributors to produce a variety of nationally recognized publications. These include model health policies for child care providers, a booklet entitled "Preparing for Illness," a device to check immunizations called the "Immunization Dose Counter," and a brochure on using powdered formula. All ECELS publications contain the most accurate and up-to-date information needed by child care providers to understand current standards and practices.

Child care providers participated in 16,715 units of training.

Training opportunities focus on reviewing immunization and preventive health service records, traffic injury prevention, general health and safety, American Red Cross Child Care, and self-learning modules on health and safety for day care home providers. Child care providers participated in 16,715 units of training via ECELS.

Other noteworthy accomplishments of ECELS include:

- responses to almost 4,000 requests for specific health information;
- conference presentations on infection control, health policies, inclusion and illness prevention;
- increased circulation – from 12,500 to 15,800 – of the quarterly HEALTH LINK newsletter, including distribution to unregulated providers; and
- recruitment of health professional consultants so at least one consultant is available in 63 of the state's 67 counties.

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Clearly, the Department of Public Welfare and regional collaborative agencies have offered early childhood professionals numerous training opportunities during the past year. Whether urban or rural, small family operators or large center operators, center directors or aides, all have access to quality training programs. In a state as large and diverse as Pennsylvania, that is no small accomplishment.

Future changes in the Commonwealth's child care/early childhood development training system will address "fine-tuning" issues. Energies will be directed to finding common elements of the enrollment process and to developing databases of training activities of all participants in the state.

Further, it is hoped that a "seamless system" can be created so that child care employees may enter the training system via any provider and move among providers to obtain whatever training is necessary. All contractors are part of an advisory team that will consider these issues for the 1993-94 year.

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Training Type	Number of Training Events	Number of Instructional Hours	Number of People Trained
Family Focused Early Intervention System	206	927	9,500
School Age Child Care (SACC)	113	328	2,200
Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS)	22	38,715	16,715
Licensed Child Care Centers (LCCC)	937	2,811	21,588
Legally Unregulated Child Care	75	229	2,250
Home-Based Care	660	9,163	2,875
Totals	2,013	52,173	55,128

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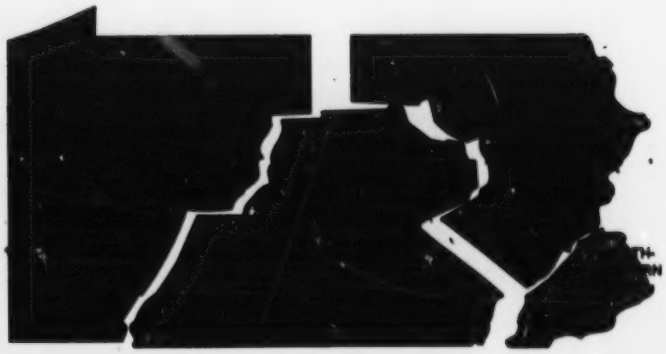
Child Care/ Early Childhood Development Training Coordinators



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